

From: mate@sci.brooklyn.cuny.edu@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 2:09pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Wed Jan 23 01:23:50 PM EST 2002

To: Renata B. Hesse
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
601 D Street NW
Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Under the Tunney Act, I wish to comment on the proposed Microsoft settlement. The settlement as it is currently negotiated has no teeth in it, and it will not restrain Microsoft's abuse of its monopoly power. Microsoft's abuse of its monopoly are still continuing. A recent example is the transfer of Silicon Graphics Inc.'s key 3D patents to Microsoft; see

<http://www.theregister.co.uk/content/54/23708.html>
Silicon Graphics used to be in the forefront of producing graphics software; the movie industry is still very much dependent on Silicon Graphics software. The destruction of Silicon Graphics is connected with the tenure as chief executive officer of Richard Belluzzo, when Silicon Graphics was trying to move its software from a Unix environment to a Microsoft environment. Since then Richard Belluzzo moved to Microsoft Corp., where he became president and chief operating officer. The background to this move would be well worth investigating by the Justice Department. On Richard Belluzzo, see

<http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/exec/belluzzo/default.asp>
In any case, the free world, meaning the world outside Microsoft, is terrified that the patents that were handled responsibly by Silicon Graphics, might be used to corner the computer workstation and computer game markets.

I am a Linux user, and I have been using Unix or Linux for over 15 years. I prefer Linux to Microsoft software for practical, and not ideological reasons. There is a lot of valuable software that is available under Linux but not under Microsoft. This software may not have the wide market appeal of Microsoft software, but it is indispensable for technically oriented users.

If Microsoft is able to retain its monopoly position, it is likely to do everything in its power to suppress Linux and other free software, and this would be a great loss to technically oriented users. For this reason, the

Microsoft settlement needs to be renegotiated, so that free software should have a chance to survive.

The main importance of free software is not that it is free; its importance is that it is written by expert programmers enthusiastic about contributing to the public good. This enthusiasm does not exist in programmers writing for a Microsoft platform. The Web site

<http://linuxtoday.com/>

is a good one to follow concerning the alarm created in the free software community by Microsoft's predatory practices.

Sincerely yours,

Attila Mate
Professor of Mathematics
Brooklyn College of CUNY

USA Citizen
Home address:
77 West 15th Street, Apt. 5J
New York, NY 10011-6832

mate@sci.brooklyn.cuny.edu
<http://www.sci.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~mate/>
Home phone: (212)929-0966